

April 11, 2005

Alexandra Rowe  
Environmental/Transmission Engineer  
Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc.  
366 Pinnacle Ridge Road  
Rutland, Vermont 05701

**Re: Joint Petition of Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. (“VELCO”), Green Mountain Power Corporation (“GMP”) and the Town of Stowe Electric Department (“Stowe”) for a Certificate of Public Good pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §248 authorizing VELCO to construct 9.4 miles of 115 kV transmission line; upgrade an existing GMP 34.5 kV line; upgrade a substation in Moretown, Vermont; construct a switching station in Duxbury, Vermont; construct a substation in Stowe, Vermont; and for Stowe to construct 1.05 miles of 34.5 kV transmission line in Stowe, Vermont.**

**Public Service Board Docket No. 7032 and Army Corps of Engineers.**

Dear Ms. Rowe:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above project having Vermont’s Public Service Board (PSB) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) involvement.

The Division for Historic Preservation (Division) is providing the PSB with our comments pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248 in an effort to ensure the PSB has the information necessary to complete their review of VELCO’s and GMP’s so-called Lamoille County 115 kV Project with regard to historic resources. \* The Division also is providing the Corps with comments pursuant to 36 CFR 300.4, regulation established by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In both cases, project review consists of identifying the project’s potential impacts to historic buildings, structures, historic districts, historic landscapes and settings, and known or potential archeological resources.

VELCO and GMP have filed petitions for a Certificate of Public Good authorizing VELCO to construct the Lamoille County 115 kV Project described above. The Division is reviewing this project for both above ground (architectural) and below ground (archeological) historic resources. Both types of resources are discussed herein.

### **Historic Architectural Resources**

The Division has reviewed reports and correspondences to reach our conclusion regarding the effects of the Lamoille County 115 kV Project on historic resources. We have relied principally on VELCO Exhibit HHH-2, Historic Analysis Report dated December 06, 2004 by Hugh H. Henry and T. J. Boyle and Associates to assist us with our recommendations.

In order to review the effects of the proposed project on historic resources the Division must first identify the historic resources in the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE). The majority of historic buildings and structures in the project's APE were previously identified and already listed in the State Register or National Register of Historic Places. Henry and Boyle located two historic resources not previously identified as historic and we concur with their opinions regarding whether the buildings are historic. Therefore, it is our opinion, and our recommendation to the Public Service Board, that the following buildings and structures identified in the Henry and Boyle report are eligible for listing in the State Register:

<b>Town</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Resource #</b>	<b>Type of Building(s)</b>
Waterbury	1214 Blush Hill Road	W-10	House
Moscow	Little River Bridge, Moscow Road	(#S.A.76)	Bridge

For purposes of our federal review, it also is our opinion that the above resources are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

In their report, Henry and Boyle also identified two resources currently listed on the State Register of Historic Places that have been extensively altered since they were listed. According to the consultants, the Miller House at 58 North Main Street in Waterbury (#W-2) and DeCelle's Barn on Moscow Road in the Moscow Historic District (S-2-12), are no longer eligible for listing on the State Register because of the extensive alteration. While the Division concurs with the consultant's opinions regarding these two resources, only the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Advisory Council) can officially remove resources from the State Register. If either owner is interested in having the Advisory Council review whether their building should remain on the State Register he/she should contact the Division. For the purposes of the Lamoille County 115 kV Project, however, it does not appear that either of these structures will be adversely affected.

The Division concurs with the assessment of the effects of the Lamoille County 115 kV Project as discussed in the Henry and Boyle report. Therefore, the Division recommends to the Public Service Board that the project will have no adverse effect to historic architectural resources provided the following two conditions are met:

1) The conditions to avoid adverse impacts for the following resources, as detailed in the Henry and Boyle report, are followed:

<b>Town</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Resource #</b>	<b>Proposed Mitigation (See reports for details)</b>
Waterbury	Wallace House Blush Hill Road	W-5	H-frame pole structures across pasture no taller than 50 feet with careful placement on slope.
Waterbury	Davies House Gregg Hill Road	W-7	H-frame pole structures across pasture no taller than 50 feet, matching positions for both lines and using wood poles.
Waterbury	Baker House Gregg Hill Road	W-8	Careful placement of poles to avoid visibility and match arcs of parallel conductors.
Waterbury	Woule House Gregg Hill Road	W-9	Careful placement of poles to avoid visibility and match arcs of parallel conductors.
Moscow	(Horace Warren) House River Road	S-2-1	Maintain coniferous trees on opposite side of the road to screen lines.
Stowe	Lower Village Historic District Vt. Route 100 and River Road	S-4	Plant shrubs and trees along the east side of the proposed substation to screen it from the Lower Village.

2) Hugh H. Henry will complete Historic Sites and Structures Survey forms for the two properties listed above that he identified as being historic.

To assist us in our review, the Division applied our *Criteria for Evaluating the Effect of Telecommunications Facilities on Historic Resources (Criteria)* to the proposed Lamoille County 115 kV Project as the potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed transmission lines on above ground historic resources are similar to those of telecommunications towers, despite the obvious differences in the structures themselves. While these *Criteria* have not been officially adopted for projects other than telecommunications facilities, their application is useful when reviewing other types of projects that have the potential to block views. A copy of the *Criteria* is enclosed.

### **Archeological Resources**

The Division has received a copy of the September 2004 draft report entitled *Phase IA Site Sensitivity Study of the VELCO Greater Lamoille County 115 kV Project between Duxbury, Washington County and Stowe, Lamoille County, Vermont* prepared by VELCO's consultant, the Archaeology Consulting Team, Inc. (ACT). ACT identified two highly sensitive and seven moderately sensitive areas for Native American sites within the proposed corridor and recommended that these areas be avoided or subject to additional archeological investigation. In addition, ACT provided data on a former nineteenth century schoolhouse that may have been located within the corridor and five historic farmsteads that appear to be outside the project's area of potential effect. ACT indicated that no further archeological review is required in these areas unless future project components such as access roads or staging area are proposed in their vicinity.

The Division concurs with the above recommendations and concludes that the Greater Lamoille Project will not have an undue adverse effect on any archeological resources if the following stipulations are included in the Certificate of Public Good:

- 1) All known archeological sites and archeologically sensitive areas in the estimated Area of Potential Effect (APE) shall be marked on project plans and identified as not-to-be-disturbed buffer zones. VELCO shall also conduct archeological resource assessments on any project component not currently within the estimated APE to identify any known sites and archeological sensitive areas. Any such assessments must be reviewed and approved by the Division for Historic Preservation (Division) and all known sites and archeologically sensitive areas must be mapped and identified as not-to-be-disturbed buffer zones
- 2) Topsoil removal, grading, scraping, cutting, filling, stockpiling, logging or any other type of ground disturbance is prohibited within the buffer zones prior to conducting all appropriate archeological studies. Clearing of vegetation with no associated ground disturbance such as stumping or rutting from vehicular traffic is permissible. All project contractors will be fully notified about the buffer zone restrictions.
- 3) Archeological studies to identify or evaluate sites will be carried by a qualified consulting archeologist in all archeologically sensitive and known site areas to be impacted by the proposed project. The archeological studies will be scheduled accordingly so that mitigation measures that may be necessary can be satisfactorily planned and accomplished prior to construction.
- 4) All archeological studies and assessments must be conducted by a qualified consulting archeologist and must follow the Division's Guidelines for Conducting Archeological Studies in Vermont. The permittee's archeological consultant must submit any scope of work to the Division for review and approval.

- 5) Archeological sites within the project area will not be impacted until any necessary mitigation measures have been carried out. Mitigation may include but is not limited to further site evaluation, data recovery, redesign of one or more proposed project components, or specific conditions that may be imposed during construction, such as installation of construction barriers or protective matting etc.
- 6) Proposed mitigation measures will be discussed with and approved by the Division prior to implementation, and a copy of all mitigation proposals will be filed with the Public Service Board (PSB). The archeological studies will result in one or more final reports, as appropriate, that meet the Division's Guidelines for Conducting Archeological Studies in Vermont. Copies will be submitted both to the Division and to the PSB.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on this project. As always, we request the opportunity to review any new or revised project plans as soon as they become available in order to assess any potential impacts to historic resources.

If you have any questions or need clarification regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact Judith Williams Ehrlich, Environmental Review Coordinator, at (802) 828-3049.

Sincerely,  
VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Jane Lendway  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

Cc: Service List (with enclosure)

\* Because the Public Service Board uses the Act 250 criteria to evaluate potential project effects, the Division is offering our opinion of this project on behalf of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation pursuant to Section 4.1.4 of the Vermont Historic Preservation Act Rules, which were dated March 15, 2001 and state the following:

**4.1.4 Participation and Delegation.** Pursuant to 22 V.S.A. § 742(a)(8), the Council has delegated to the SHPO, or his or her designee in the Division, performance of certain functions in the Act 250 process with respect to buildings, structures, objects, districts, areas and archeological sites, including, but not limited to:

- (1) identification of historic significance, including application of the State Register criteria to provide testimony on behalf of the Council to a District Commission or the Environmental Board as to whether a resource is historically significant;
- (2) presentation of evidence to the Council to aid the Council in evaluating whether a building, structure, object, district, area or archeological site is historically significant, in the event an applicant requests an evaluation of significance from the Council;
- (3) presentation of testimony about the Council's evaluation of significance to the District Commission or Environmental Board, when requested by the Council.

For any reason, an applicant, the SHPO, or the chairperson of the Advisory Council may request that the Council evaluate the historic significance of a resource under Rule 4.